

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-22, 24-33, 35-44, 46-55, 57-64, 66-75 and 77-82 are pending in this application, with 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 19, 30, 41, 51, 62 and 72 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 19, 30, 41, 51, 62 and 72 are amended. Claims 23, 34, 45, 56, 65 and 76 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action dated July 15, 2004, claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 19, 30, 41, 51, 62 and 72 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 4, 10, 13-18, 20-29, 31-40, 42-50, 52-61, 63-71 and 73-82 are objected to.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the reasoning expressed in the Final Office Action, the independent claims have been amended to incorporate the limitation of "M+k<=L," which was recited in some of the dependent claims. Accordingly, dependent claims 23, 34, 45, 56, 65 and 76 have been canceled. These amendments address the Examiner's comments on page 2 of the Final Office Action. Applicants believe that all the pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

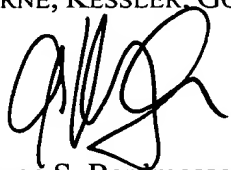
All of the stated grounds of rejection and objection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and

that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



George S. Bardmesser
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 44,020

Date: _____

7/30/04

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600